

type of which I have never seen come from the Deputy Attorney General's office. I worked on reports that we made with the Office of Professional Responsibility at the Department of Justice. I never saw a report like this before. But what I really find amazing about this decision—and I don't know why the decision was made; I am the first to say that I don't know—is that, having been in the Senate, having worked in the Deputy Attorney General's office at the Department of Justice, that nobody at the White House said to the President: Maybe the best thing to do is not to fire the FBI Director when he is in the middle of an investigation about ties of your campaign to Russia, because maybe that will undermine Americans' confidence in the rule of law, and maybe that will undermine Americans' confidence in this administration and worry people that the FBI isn't treating this fairly. The idea that not a single member of the administration was successful in making that case to the President is really worrisome to me tonight, and it is one of the reasons why people think the answer to why this firing occurred is simply not credible.

President Trump, unlike some, has repeatedly praised Director Comey over the past months. He said he had guts. He said: "I respect him a lot." Now, overnight, based on a completely nonroutine letter written at the request of the President, he has turned 180 degrees.

The American people deserve an explanation for this unprecedented action. They deserve an explanation tonight. They deserved one this afternoon. They know this isn't how our government is supposed to work. I think the reason why people in Colorado and in other parts of the country, I am sure, are concerned is that this dismissal is not the first action the President has taken that raised concerns about his commitment to the rule of law or his commitment to the independent judiciary or to the freedom of the press under the First Amendment when he doesn't like the scrutiny he or his administration are getting from a free press. He does not have a fundamental appreciation for the basic institutions and traditions of this country.

It is a great irony, I think, at this moment in our politics, that the President represents a radical view of American history and American traditions. It is my hope that this Senate—Republicans and Democrats working together—can express together a conservative view of those traditions, a view that says: We need to preserve the sanctity of the rule of law. We need to preserve and elevate the idea that the judicial branch is an independent judiciary, separate from the legislative branch, separate from the executive branch.

The Founders knew that when they wrote the Constitution. One of their biggest concerns was that somehow the

judiciary and the executive branch might reach some sort of unholy alliance that would all of a sudden call the rule of law into question.

I think that is why people are worried. They are worried because they remember this President slandered a judge because of his ethnicity and said that he wouldn't be able to decide a case fairly because of where his parents came from. They remember his attacks on the free press, as well, when he doesn't like their reporting, and his resorting to talking about fake news when he doesn't like the reporting.

I have had to talk with so many high school students and middle school students in Colorado over the last 4 or 5 months about this whole question of fake news and what the importance of edited content is to our society and, again, to our commitment to the rule of law—the importance that middle school students and high school students place on edited content and on curated content; their ability to distinguish between something that is science or something that is real, something that is edited versus somebody shooting their mouth off on the internet.

The President has a hard time making that distinction, as well. He has shown little regard for the traditions and norms that our Founders established when they created this separation of powers.

So I say to my colleagues tonight, the Senate must stand firm and speak with one voice—Democrats and Republicans. We now have a vacancy in the FBI Director, and we need to make sure that whoever that is, whoever replaces James Comey, pledges to continue the ongoing investigation and reinforce the FBI's independence from undue influence from the White House. That needs to be nonnegotiable. In my view, that is the least that must happen.

In order for the American people to learn the full truth, the Deputy Attorney General must immediately appoint an independent special prosecutor to investigate Russian interference in the 2016 election, which, by the way, everybody I know up here believes happened. But the President continues to say: Maybe it was the Chinese; maybe it wasn't the Russians. No intelligence agency in America believes that. No Senator believes that.

The President, who has access to all of that intelligence, is saying: It might not have been the Russians; it might be the Chinese.

We need to know. I am not prejudging the result, but we need to know what these links were, if there were links, between the Trump campaign and the Russian Government. These are serious questions that need answers. I worry a lot about what the President has said about our allies in Europe, what the President has said about NATO, what the President has said about the European Union—none of which serves the national security

interests of the United States but is an invitation to the Russians to continue to meddle in elections, not just here but in Western Europe and in Eastern Europe as well. It is hard for me to see how that is in anybody's national security interest, except for the Russians or President Putin.

Our intelligence agencies have been crystal clear to the Members of Congress that the Russian Government tried to influence the 2016 election in President Trump's favor. The American people deserve to know what the truth is. What is the extent of these relationships? It goes to the core of our security. It goes to the heart of our democracy. That is why preserving this investigation's integrity is so vital.

I can tell you that the American people are not going to relent. I understand there will be some time here when people want to collect their thoughts and gather their thoughts. The American people are not going to relent. They are going to want an independent investigation here. For all Americans and, I would say, most of the time, but certainly at moments like this—this is a moment in the course of our politics when they say to us: Partisanship needs to give way to patriotism. This is one of those moments.

I urge every Member of this body, every Member of Congress, to rise above the pressure of the moment and see this not as just another skirmish in our endless and often pathetic feuding but as a test of the resilience of these institutions and of our Republic, a test of whether we as Congress stand for something more than winning praise from our base in a cable news cycle or in the next election or whether we take seriously our oaths to put our institutions, our security, and our country first.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority leader.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CONGRESSIONAL REVIEW ACT RESOLUTION

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. President, I oppose this blatant giveaway to the oil and gas industry at the expense of public health and the environment. We are now at the eleventh hour of expedited consideration of resolutions to overturn Obama-era rules, and the majority is bringing forward this legislation to overturn a Bureau of Land Management rule on methane waste.

The BLM methane rule is a reasonable, achievable way to limit emissions of methane—a particularly potent greenhouse gas—and save taxpayer money. The rule would prevent the oil and gas industry from excessive venting and flaring of methane into the air and ensure that they work more quickly to address methane leaks. As we have seen in Colorado, which has a similar rule, the technology to meet these requirements exists and is not prohibitively expensive.

The BLM rule is a tremendously effective way to address greenhouse gases. Simply limiting these methane emissions would be the equivalent of taking nearly 1 million cars off the roads. Reducing methane leaks also prevents the leak of volatile organic compounds and other pollutants that contribute to ground-level ozone and damage public health.

By overturning this rule, the Senate would not just have given the oil and gas industry the green light to keep polluting, it would essentially be paying them to do it. Right now, companies don't pay royalties on wasted gas from public lands. If we allow them to continue their inefficient practices, they will avoid more than \$800 million in royalties over the next decade. Because States where operations are located get a large share of the royalties, western States like Colorado, Wyoming, Utah, and Montana would lose out on millions of dollars. Oil and gas companies will be taking public resources, wastefully venting them into the atmosphere, and avoiding any cost for that behavior.

Stakeholders like sportsmen, conservationists, tribal leaders, and consumer groups support the methane rule. The only voices asking for its repeal are the oil and gas industry and the Koch brothers. We should stand for our constituents and taxpayers instead.

ARMS SALES NOTIFICATION

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, section 36(b) of the Arms Export Control Act requires that Congress receive prior notification of certain proposed arms sales as defined by that statute. Upon such notification, the Congress has 30 calendar days during which the sale may be reviewed. The provision stipulates that, in the Senate, the notification of proposed sales shall be sent to the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

In keeping with the committee's intention to see that relevant information is available to the full Senate, I ask unanimous consent to have printed in the RECORD the notifications which have been received. If the cover letter references a classified annex, then such annex is available to all Senators in the office of the Foreign Relations Committee, room SD-423.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

DEFENSE SECURITY
COOPERATION AGENCY,
Arlington, VA.

Hon. BOB CORKER,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations,
U.S. Senate, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Pursuant to the reporting requirements of Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended, we are forwarding herewith Transmittal No. 17-21, concerning the Army's proposed Letter(s) of Offer and Acceptance to the Government of the United Arab Emirates for defense articles and services estimated to cost \$2.0 billion. After this letter is delivered to your office, we plan to issue a news release to notify the public of this proposed sale.

Sincerely,

J. W. RIXEY,
Vice Admiral, USN, Director.

Enclosures.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17-21

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act, as amended

(i) Prospective Purchaser: Government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

(ii) Total Estimated Value:
Major Defense Equipment* \$1.0 billion.
Other \$1.0 billion.
Total \$2.0 billion.

(iii) Description and Quantity or Quantities of Articles or Services under Consideration for Purchase:

Major Defense Equipment (MDE):

Sixty (60) Patriot Advanced Capability 3 (PAC-3) Missiles with canisters.

One hundred (100) Patriot Guidance Enhanced Missile-Tactical (GEM-T) Missiles.

Non-MDE includes:

Also included are canisters, tools and test equipment, support equipment, publications and technical documentation, spare and repair parts, U.S. Government and contractor technical, engineering and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistics and program support.

(iv) Military Department: Army (AE-B-ZUG, Amendment 8).

(v) Prior Related Cases, if any: AE-B-ZUG.

(vi) Sales Commission, Fee, etc., Paid, Offered, or Agreed to be Paid: None.

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology Contained in the Defense Article or Defense Services Proposed to be Sold: See Attached Annex.

(viii) Date Report Delivered to Congress: May 10, 2017.

*As defined in Section 47(6) of the Arms Export Control Act.

POLICY JUSTIFICATION

Government of the United Arab Emirates (UAE)—Patriot PAC-3 and GEM-T Missiles

The Government of the United Arab Emirates has requested the possible sale of sixty (60) Patriot Advanced Capability 3 (PAC-3) missiles with canisters and one hundred (100) Patriot Guidance Enhanced Missile-Tactical (GEM-T) missiles. Also included are canisters, tools and test equipment, support equipment, publications and technical documentation, spare and repair parts, U.S. Government and contractor technical, engineering and logistics support services, and other related elements of logistics and program support. The estimated cost is \$2 billion.

This proposed sale will contribute to the foreign policy and national security of the United States by improving the security of an important ally which has been, and continues to be, a force for political stability and economic progress in the Middle East. This sale is consistent with U.S. initiatives to provide key allies in the region with mod-

ern systems that will enhance interoperability with U.S. forces and increase security.

The proposed sale will enhance the UAE's capability to meet current and future aircraft and missile threats. The UAE will use the capability as a deterrent to regional threats and to strengthen its homeland defense. The UAE has fielded the Patriot system since 2009 and will have no difficulty absorbing these additional missiles into its armed forces.

The proposed sale of these missiles will not alter the basic military balance in the region.

The prime contractor for the PAC-3 Missile is Lockheed-Martin in Dallas, Texas. The prime contractor for the GEM-T missile is Raytheon Company in Andover, Massachusetts. There are no known offset agreements proposed in connection with this potential sale.

Implementation of this proposed sale will require additional contractor representatives to the UAE. It is not expected additional U.S. Government personnel will be required in country for an extended period of time. U.S. Army Aviation and Missile Life Cycle Management Command (AMCOM) currently maintains a field office in UAE in support of UAE Patriot systems.

There will be no adverse impact on U.S. defense readiness as a result of this proposed sale.

TRANSMITTAL NO. 17-21

Notice of Proposed Issuance of Letter of Offer Pursuant to Section 36(b)(1) of the Arms Export Control Act

Annex Item No. vii

(vii) Sensitivity of Technology:

1. The Patriot Advanced Capability-3 Missile Segment Enhancement/Configuration-3 Ground Support Equipment (PAC-3 MSE/C-3) Air Defense System. The Patriot Advanced Capability-3/Configuration-3 Ground Support Equipment (PAC-3/C-3) Air Defense System contains classified CONFIDENTIAL hardware components, SECRET tactical software, and critical/sensitive technology. The PAC-3 Missile Four-Pack and Guidance Enhanced Missile (GEM-T) hardware is classified CONFIDENTIAL and the associated launcher hardware is UNCLASSIFIED. The items requested represent significant technological advances for UAE. The PAC-3/C-3 Air Defense System continues to hold a significant technology lead over other surface-to-air missile systems in the world.

2. The PAC-3/C-3 sensitive/critical technology is primarily in the area of design and production know-how and primarily inherent in the design, development and/or manufacturing data related to the following components:

- a. Radar Enhancement Phase III (REP-3) Exciter Assemblies
- b. Radar Digital Processor
- c. Modern Adjunct Processor
- d. REP-3 Traveling Wave Tube
- e. Classification, Discrimination, and Identification-3 (CDI-3) Digital Signal Processor
- f. CDI-3 Analog/Digital Converters
- g. Hardware-in-the-Loop and Digital Simulations
- h. Surface Acoustic Wave (SAW) Oscillators
- i. PAC-3 Missile Guidance Processor Unit
- j. PAC-3 Seeker
- k. PAC-3 Missile Software
- l. PAC-3 MSE Software
- m. GEM-T Fuze
- n. GEM-T SAW Oscillator
- o. Selected areas of the Patriot Ground Equipment software
- p. Multiband Radio Frequency Datalink (MRFDL)